

Message Text

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ORIGIN SY-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 /016 R

DRAFTED BY A/SY/FO:WHSARGENT:JP

APPROVED BY A/SY/FO - VERNE F. ST. MARS

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NEA/EX - DWILLIAMSON

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R 221549Z MAY 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SANAA

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 119638

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC

SUBJECT: SPECIAL EQUIPMENT TRANSFER

FOR RSO SANAA; BEIRUT FOR RSS FROM A/SY/FO

1. WE DO NOT APPROVE TRANSFER OF ANY MORE M-16'S TO SANAA.
2. THE M-16 FIRING THE 5.56MM IS A RELATIVELY LONG RANGE, FLAT TRAJECTORY, HIGH VELOCITY ARM WITH HIGH PENETRATION CAPABILITY WITH CONSIDERABLE RICOCHETTE POTENTIAL. IT IS NOT SUITABLE IN A "COMPOUND-ONLY" ENVIRONMENT IN ANY URBAN OR SEMI-URBAN ENVIRONMENT WITH HARD, FLAT SURFACED BUILDINGS. CITIZENS AND/OR OFFICIALS WITHIN 1000 METERS WOULD BE ENDANGERED DURING ANY FIRING. SUCH AN ENVIRONMENT ALLOWS FOR THE USE OF ONLY SHORT RANGE, LOW PENETRATION, HIGH STOPPING POWER WEAPONS, BEST EXEMPLIFIED BY THE RIOT SHOT-GUN USING NO. 4 BUCK. FYI, OUR TESTS WITH THE 5.56MM BALL AMMUNITION INDICATES THAT THE M-16 HAS GREATER PENETRATION CAPABILITY IN A VARIETY OF METALS, WOODS, CERAMICS, PLASTICS AND OTHER OPAQUE AND TRANSPARENT MATERIAL, THAN ANY OTHER U.S. AND FOREIGN INFANTRY SMALL ARM. IT PENETRATES, FOR
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EXAMPLE, THE 1/4" XAR-30 TEMPERED STEEL USED FOR ARMOR ON

A NUMBER OF TACTICAL MILITARY VEHICLES, WHEREAS THE .30 CAL BALL AND 7.62 NATO AND 7.62 RUSSIAN SHORT WILL BE DEFEATED

BY XAR-30. THE M-16 HAS A RATED EFFECTIVE MILITARY RANGE OF 300 METERS, BUT IT ALSO HAS CONSIDERABLE KILLING RANGE BEYOND THAT. REPORTS FROM MILITARY ENCOUNTERS INDICATE IT HAS COMPLETELY PENETRATED MEN SHOT WITH THIS WEAPON AT THESE RANGES. THEREFORE, WE FEEL THAT IF THE M-16 IS USED IN OR NEAR AN URBAN ENVIRONMENT, REGARDLESS OF VALIDITY OF REASON FOR ITS USE, COULD RESULT IN PEOPLE BEING SHOT UNINTENTIONALLY, WHICH OF COURSE WILL PROBABLY BE DIPLOMATICALLY DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN AND/OR JUSTIFY.

3. HOWEVER, WE POSE NO OBJECTIONS TO ITS USE IN THE FOLLOW CAR OUTSIDE SANAA IN MOUNTAIN OR DESERT TERRAIN, AND AGREE IT IS SUPERIOR TO SMG'S, PISTOLS OR SHOTGUNS IN SUCH SETTINGS. THEREFORE, BEIRUT CAN CONTINUE SHIPMENT OF TWO M-16'S AS APPROVED IN STATE 040341. IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT THEY WILL BE USED ONLY FOR THE PROTECTION DETAIL IN THE YARG FOLLOW CAR DURING TRIPS OUTSIDE OF THE CITY. INGERSOLL

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